

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 005190

THE HAGUE FOR RSO

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM COPENHAGEN DATED JANUARY 4, 1978
SENT SECSTATE WASHDC, TEHRAN INFO BONN, BRUSSELS,
PARIS, ROME, STOCKHOLM, VIENNA IS REPEATED TO YOU: QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L COPENHAGEN 0067

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, DA, IR

SUBJECT: DANISH ATTITUDES TOWARD FOREIGN MALFEASANCE IN DENMARK

REF: A. TEHRAN 51 B. 77 COPENHAGEN 7660 C. 77 COPENHAGEN 4979
(NOTAL)

SUMMARY. DANISH GOVERNMENT HANDLING OF THE IRANIAN DEMONSTRATORS WAS
CONSISTENT WITH DANISH TRADITIONAL RESPONSE TO SUCH INCIDENTS. THE
DANISH CHARACTER IS NON-CONFRONTATIONAL, AND THE GOVERNMENT IS
PERHAPS MORE SENSITIVE THAN OTHERS TO CHARGES OF "ANTI-HUMANITARIAN-
ISM." PROTESTS IN TWO RECENT CASES INVOLVING THE DEPORTATION
OF FOREIGN NATIONALS ARE STILL REVERBERATING. THE DANES--AND
PROBABLY THE IRANIAN AMBASSADOR HERE-- WANTED TO AVOID A SIMILAR
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PAGE 02 STATE 005190

SITUATION IN THE CASE OF THE IRANIAN DEMONSTRATORS. WHAT REMAINS
UNCERTAIN IS HOW THE DANISH GOVERNMENT WOULD REACT IF FACED WITH
REAL VIOLENCE OR TERRORISM. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING A JANUARY 1 CONVERSATION, MFA POLITICAL DIRECTOR OLE
BIERRING REITERATED TO POLCOUNCS DENMARK'S POSITION THAT THE
IRANIAN AMBASSADOR HAD CONCURRED IN THE NON-PROSECUTION AND

DEPORTATION OF IRANIAN DEMONSTRATORS BUT WAS OVERRULED BY TEHRAN. IN VIEW OF REF (A) REPORT AND OUR JUDGMENT OF MFA VERACITY, WE CONCLUDE THAT THIS MUST HAVE BEEN THE CASE. A SEPARATE TELEGRAM OFFERS A GLIMPSE OF THE EXTENT OF DAMAGE TO THE DANISH ECONOMY FROM THE IMPORT BAN. THE PRESENT CABLE TAKES A LOOK AT LARGER DANISH ATTITUDES TOWARD SUCH INCIDENTS.

2. THE DESIGN ON THE PART OF THE IRANIAN DEMONSTRATORS--ALL FROM OUTSIDE DENMARK--TO STAGE THEIR ACT HERE IS PROBABLY AT LEAST PARTLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE DANISH IMAGE OF BEING SOFT ON DEMONSTRATORS, DISSIDENTS AND EVEN, PERHAPS, TERRORISTS. THIS IMAGE MAY NOT BE ALTOGETHER WARRANTED, FOR HAPPILY THE DANES HAVE NOT HAD TO DEAL WITH THE KINDS OF VIOLENCE THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN MANY OTHER COUNTRIES IN WESTERN EUROPE.

3. THERE IS RESPECTABLE EVIDENCE, HOWEVER, THAT SUGGESTS THAT ONE OF THE REASONS FOR THIS ABSENCE OF VIOLENCE IS THAT TERRORISTS USE DENMARK AS A "SAFE HAVEN" WHERE THEY PLAN INCIDENTS ELSEWHERE. AND IT IS CERTAINLY TRUE THAT THE DANISH CHARACTER--TO THE EXTENT THAT A GENERALIZATION IS POSSIBLE--IS NON-CONFRONTATIONAL. FURTHERMORE, THE DANISH GOVERNMENT MAY BE MORE SENSITIVE TO "ANTI-HUMANITARIAN" ACCUSATIONS THAN SOME OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN WESTERN EUROPE.

4. A CLAMOR, FOR EXAMPLE, STILL CONTINUES AS THE RESULT OF THE DANISH GOVERNMENT'S DEPORTATION OF "THE MEXICAN" BACK TO HIS OWN COUNTRY (REF C). IN BRIEF, THIS INVOLVED A MEXICAN NATIONAL WHOM THE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 005190

DANISH GOVERNMENT HAD CONCLUDED WAS CONNECTED WITH TERRORIST ACTIVITY IN SWEDEN. APPARENTLY BECAUSE OF THE SENSITIVITY OF THE INFORMATION HELD BY THE DANES, THE MEXICAN, JAIME OKUSONO MARTINEZ, WAS DEPORTED WITHOUT A FORMAL HEARING. THE LACK OF SUCH A HEARING WAS CRITICIZED BY MANY DANES, NOT JUST THOSE FROM THE LEFT, AND CONSIDERABLE CONSTERNATION WAS RAISED OVER THE PUNISHMENT TO WHICH MARTINEZ MIGHT BE SUBJECTED UPON HIS RETURN TO MEXICO.

5. A SECOND CASE, WHICH HAS ALSO ATTRACTED ATTENTION AND AS FAR AS WE KNOW REMAINS UNRESOLVED, IS THAT OF A FRENCH NATIONAL IN CUSTODY HERE WHO EXTRADITION HAS BEEN SOUGHT BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT. REPORTEDLY, THE CRIME WITH WHICH HE IS CHARGED IN FRANCE MIGHT RESULT IN THE DEATH PENALTY. THE DANES CONTINUE TO REFUSE EXTRADITION PENDING REQUESTED ASSURANCES FROM THE FRENCH THAT SUCH A PENALTY WOULD NOT BE LEVIED.

6. WITH THESE TWO RECENT CASES, AS WELL AS THE GENERAL DANISH POLITICAL CLIMATE AS BACKGROUND, THE DANISH AUTHORITIES WERE OBVIOUSLY ANXIOUS TO AVOID WHAT COULD HAVE BECOME ANOTHER CAUSE CELEBRE. THE CAUSE OF THE IMPRISONED IRANIAN DEMONSTRATORS WOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN UP BOTH BY THE USUAL PROTESTORS AS WELL AS THE IRANIAN

STUDENTS RESIDENT HERE, MANY OF WHOM ARE ANTI-SHAH. A HARBINGER OF WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN IN STORE WAS THE OBVIOUSLY WELL-ORCHESTRATED FLOOD OF TELEGRAMS RECEIVED BY THE DANISH AUTHORITIES IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ARREST OF THE DEMONSTRATORS.

7. FINALLY, IT IS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT THE IRANIAN AMBASSADOR HERE MIGHT CONCLUDE WITH OFFICIALS IN THE DANISH FOREIGN MINISTRY THAT THE RESULTS OF A TRIAL, CONVICTION AND SUBSEQUENT IN-CARCERATION OF THE DEMONSTRATORS COULD HAVE BECOME A RUNNING SORE TO POISON WHAT HAD HERETOFORE BEEN ACCEPTABLE DANISH-IRANIAN RELATIONS.

8. WHAT REMAINS UNCERTAIN IS HOW THE DANISH GOVERNMENT WOULD REACT IF FACED WITH REAL TERRORISM OR VIOLENCE. THE POLICE HAVE A SPECIALLY-TRAINED ANTI-TERRORIST FORCE READY. BUT A POLITICAL CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 STATE 005190

DECISION WILL BE REQUIRED TO EMPLOY IT.
DEAN UNQUOTE VANCE

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